Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food

Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

INDEX

NEW EXHIBITS SPICE UP "CANADA'S NATIONAL FARM SHOW" 07-23-104

MONSANTO OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS FOR RURAL GRADUATES 07-23-105

THE TASTE OF THE SOUTHWEST IS BACK: REGISTER TODAY 07-23-106

ON-FARM EXPERIENCE STRESSED IN GREEN CERTIFICATE PROGRAM 07-23-107

FORAGE AND GRAZING FIELD DAY SET FOR SWIFT CURRENT 07-23-108

Farm and Food Report is produced weekly by Zapwell Communications Group for Communications Branch, Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food
Contact: Sharon Schmidt
101-3085 Albert Street, REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN S4S 0B1
Telephone: (306) 787-5160, Fax: (306) 787-0216
Internet Page: http://www.agr.gov.sk.ca

2007-02971/

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food

Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

Log Number: 07-23-104
Week of June 4, 2007

NEW EXHIBITS SPICE UP "CANADA'S NATIONAL FARM SHOW"

Canada's largest dryland farm technology and equipment show will feature a variety of spicy new exhibits this year that will be of great interest to producers and their families.

The Western Canada Farm Progress Show is being held at IPSCO Place in Regina from June 20 to 22.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the internationally renowned event, but the show is still leading the way in innovation, technology and education for producers, buyers and sellers from here at home and around the world.

Two specific exhibits, the Heartland Woman's Expo and the Energy Centre, will be the focus of this year's event.

"The main stage will be dedicated to the needs and interests of prairie women as featured in the Heartland Women's Expo, an exciting event dedicated to providing value, entertainment and education to all women of the prairies," said Rob O'Connor, Show Manager for Western Canada Farm Progress Show.

The keynote speaker is Elaine Froese, an author and certified coach, who has been working with farm families for over 25 years. Elaine is presenting a specific topic each day at 1:00 p.m. Topics include: Living an Intentional Life – extreme self-care in a complex world; Discussing the Undiscussabull™ – tools for talking about tough issues; and Encouraging the Heart of your Family and Business – know what young families and farmers want.

The Heartland Women's Expo will feature more than 175 exhibiting companies on more than 40,000 square feet of exhibit space, and is specifically tailored to meet the needs and lifestyles of today's everyday women. Areas of the expo include fashion and beauty, travel and leisure, food and beverage, health and wellness, transportation, home improvement and décor, and financial planning.

"The second stage is dedicated to various types of renewable energy, as well as green issues," O'Connor stated. Through trade displays and educational seminars, the Energy Centre will highlight the positive impact that ethanol, bio-diesel, solar, geothermal and wind energy will have on agricultural practices.

(more)

"It's important for producers to learn how different forms of renewable energy have the ability to affect their operations as this growing industry creates opportunities," he said.

According to O'Connor, "What makes the farm show so unique in Canada is that it is so relevant to the industry. The dealers bring with them the newest of new… technology that pertains to efficient agricultural practices that will make the producer more profitable. The types of equipment and technology showcased will be improved over models from previous years."

He pointed out that a New Inventions area will highlight between 30 and 40 innovative products and devices that have been created within the past two years. "These inventions are totally new to agriculture," O'Connor said.

Since 1978, the show has grown from approximately 70 exhibitors to over 700. It now features over 1.4 million square feet of exhibit space. "We have expanded to include an International Business Centre which brings in about 400 international buyers representing 30 different countries," stated O'Connor.

Over 40,000 people from nearly 30 countries attend the show every year.

"The purpose of the event is to give associations, manufacturers, and dealers of farm equipment and technology the ability to highlight themselves and showcase their products to attendees," he said. "Producers should attend the show to look at new inventions and techniques geared towards improving their farming operations."

In addition to the treats for the eyes, there are also treats for the ears. Two concerts have been included in this year's show, featuring country legend Willie Nelson on June 20 and Paul Brandt on June 21. Tickets are available for purchase and include the price of admission to the show if they are purchased in advance. Regular admission is $10 and can be paid upon entry.

Producers can find more information on the Western Canada Farm Progress Show by visiting the website at www.myfarmshow.com.

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Rob O'Connor, Show Manager
Western Canada Farm Progress Show
Phone: (306) 781-9219
e-mail: roconnor@ipscoplace.com

Saskatchewan
Agriculture
and Food

Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

Log Number: 07-23-105
Week of June 4, 2007

MONSANTO OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS FOR RURAL GRADUATES

Monsanto Canada is offering some help to graduating students from across Canada who plan to pursue post-secondary studies pertaining to agriculture or forestry.

The 2007 Monsanto Canada Opportunity Scholarship Program will award an estimated 50 scholarships valued at $1,500 apiece to students entering their first year of post-secondary education at a recognized Canadian educational institution.

"The scholarships falls under our corporate giving program, which is really meant to help out the communities and the people who help make our business successful," said Trish Jordan in Monsanto's Public Affairs office. "Because we're an agricultural business, and we're successful when farmers are successful, that's what we've chosen to focus on in our giving program."

In order to qualify, students must come from a family farm or have a forestry background, and must have demonstrated academic excellence, leadership capabilities, and a keen interest and involvement in their rural community.

"We're looking at kids from rural areas or from farm families who actually want to explore a career in agriculture," Jordan said. "That doesn't mean they necessarily have to go into farming. There are a wide variety of opportunities in the agricultural sector, from things like business, marketing and accounting, to science, agronomy and agricultural engineering."

Monsanto has been offering the scholarship program for 16 years. Over that time, Jordan says about $825,000 has been provided to deserving students across Canada.

"The scholarship program falls into one of our top priorities, which is science and agricultural education," she stated. "That's obviously the foundation of our business. We feel that by encouraging kids to explore careers in science and/or agriculture, ultimately that's going to benefit not only our company, but the industry as a whole."

Jordan added that Saskatchewan students tend to do very well under the initiative. "Historically, I would say Saskatchewan has been the highest recipient of our scholarships. There are a lot of kids from the province who want to explore agriculture, and the University of Saskatchewan has a very strong program."

(more)

Students interested in pursuing a Monsanto scholarship need to submit a completed application, including an essay outlining what area of agriculture or forestry they would like to work in and why.

Application forms will be distributed to high schools, 4-H clubs, provincial and federal agriculture offices, farm retail outlets and seed companies. Forms are also available from Monsanto's CustomCare line at 1-800-667-4944 or can be accessed online at www.monsanto.ca.

Applications must be postmarked no later than July 16. They will be reviewed by an independent panel of judges, and winning entries will be announced in September 2007.

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Trish Jordan, Public Affairs
Monsanto Canada
Phone: (204) 985-1005

Saskatchewan
Agriculture
and Food

Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

Log Number: 07-23-106
Week of June 4, 2007

THE TASTE OF THE SOUTHWEST IS BACK: REGISTER TODAY

If your business contributes to the food industry, do not miss your opportunity to market your products at the second annual "Taste of the Southwest" on August 11. This year's event will take place on Main Street in downtown Swift Current.

The Taste of the Southwest was started to help promote food products being made in southwestern Saskatchewan by agricultural producers, processors, caterers and restaurants in the region. The event creates exposure and new markets for those in the region whose service area may currently be limited.

"This event is a very inexpensive way for businesses to feature their food products to a wide range of the public," said Gerry Holland, Regional Business Planning Specialist with Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food. "Last year's event served over 900 clients."

The event also creates a level playing field by requiring each booth to be of a similar size and appearance for a consistent cost structure. Taste of the Southwest allows booth participants to sell samples of their products to current and future customers, all done in a fun atmosphere. Participating booths will be limited to serving three of their specialty food items.

"The goal is not to provide meals, but to allow attendees to sample as many food products as possible," Holland stated. "Not to mention providing businesses with a fantastic marketing opportunity."

Food tokens will be sold to the public for $1 each. These tokens can then be exchanged at the booths for the customer's desired food items, with a maximum charge of four tokens per food item. Ten per cent of the sales are kept by the organizing committee to cover event advertising and rental costs.

The event is organized by a non-profit committee. As a result, any profits following the event will be retained for the next year's function. This year's organizing committee includes Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, producers, the Southwest REDA, Community Futures Southwest, Saskatchewan Regional Economic and Co-operative Development, Tourism Swift Current and Golden West Radio.

"A variety of entertainment will be available, such as face painting and games for the children, as well as a mixture of live entertainment," Holland said. The event will be featured as part of the Swift Current Fun Fest Weekend.

(more)

The deadline for early bird registration is sneaking up quickly. Until June 15, participants interested in renting a booth may register and secure their spots at the event for $100. After that date, booths will cost $150 apiece, with the final registration deadline being July 15.

The registration price includes access to approximately 1,000 potential customers, as well as a 10-foot by 20-foot booth with tables, chairs and electricity.

Holland encourages people not to miss this wonderful marketing opportunity for your food-related business. To obtain a registration package, contact one of the following individuals:

Britney Blackmore
Southwest REDA, Swift Current
Phone: (306) 778-4243
e-mail: bblackmore@southwestreda.ca

Sandy Garrett
Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, Swift Current
Phone: (306) 778-8285
e-mail: sgarrett@agr.gov.sk.ca

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Gerry Holland, Regional Business Planning Specialist
Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food
Phone: (306) 787-4051
e-mail: gholland@agr.gov.sk.ca

Saskatchewan
Agriculture
and Food

Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

Log Number: 07-23-107
Week of June 4, 2007

ON-FARM EXPERIENCE STRESSED IN GREEN CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Experienced farm workers and young students alike are benefiting from the Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food (SAF) Green Certificate training program.

The SAF Livestock Development Branch administers the program, which operates like an apprenticeship, with the learning taking place right on the farm.

SAF co-operates with Alberta's Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Department, which has offered a similar program since 1975.

"We have two types of trainees in the program – students and adults," says SAF Human Resources Development Specialist Jim Birch. "The administration of the program is similar for each, and the competencies for each are similar, as well."

The program covers several skill areas, including cow-calf production, feedlot production, sheep production, dairy production, crop production, and irrigated crop production. There are three levels of training available, imparting the skills required for technicians, production supervisors, and managers/owners.

"The trainee receives most of his or her education through on-the-job training under a competent farmer-trainer," said Birch. "The farmer is also responsible for the major assessment of the trainee's proficiency in farm skills, while a tester provides verification of the reliability, validity, and uniformity of the training and testing."

Central Butte is one of the schools that offer the training modules in cow-calf and field production. The facilitator, Kim Paysen, is not only a teacher, but also the operator of a cow-calf ranch and livestock equipment business in the area.

Paysen first offered the program as a special project, but in 2003 it was accepted as a province-wide course elective by Saskatchewan Learning. It is now known as the Agricultural Production Technician curriculum.

(more)

More real-world experience is evident in the main tester for the Central Butte area, Deb Oram. She and her husband Mark operate a purebred and commercial cattle operation, and practice dryland and irrigated crop production. The Orams have put their own children through the program.

Pat Jahnke, a teacher and trainee tester from the near Morse, has also been a long-time cow-calf producer. These individuals demonstrate how highly valued actual hands-on experience is for those helping to deliver the program.

SAF officials developed the Green Certificate program after extensive consultation with their counterparts in Alberta. Trainees are allowed to progress at their own rate, and the Green Certificate is awarded only after the trainee has been tested and deemed competent in all of the required skills.

"The specific skills which form the basis of the curriculum were identified by farmers in various specializations," said Birch. "Training content and proficiency standards were also established with the majority of input from producers."

One of the objectives of the program is to equip farm owners and managers to train others in the core skills required to be successful in various farming activities. This will create a supply of skilled workers for the industry in the future.

"Training employees can improve their production by improving their self-esteem and their own work ethic," Birch noted. "It also tends to encourage them to seek further education and training on their own."

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Jim Birch, Human Resources Development Specialist
Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food
Phone: (306) 787-8191
e-mail: jbirch@agr.gov.sk.ca

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food

Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

Log Number: 07-23-108
Week of June 4, 2007

FORAGE AND GRAZING FIELD DAY SET FOR SWIFT CURRENT

Cattle producers and forage experts will be interested in a forage and grazing tour taking place at the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) Research Station in Swift Current on June 26.

The tour is a joint effort of Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food (SAF), AAFC, the Southwest Forage Association and other industry partners.

SAF forage development specialist Trevor Lennox says that previous forage and grazing tours at the research station have been very successful, and organizers are expecting another great event for 2007.

"This is an excellent opportunity for participants to see first-hand the forage and grazing work going on at Swift Current and to interact with the researchers," Lennox stated.

Among the research activities that tour-goers may see are an intensive legume grazing study, a crested wheat preference study, rotational grazing of seeded native mixtures, establishing native grasses in combination with various legumes (alfalfa and purple prairie clover), AC Saltlander, intermediate wheatgrass, pubescent wheatgrass, and a comparison of warm and cool season perennials for forage.

One of the tour organizers is Dr. Alan Iwaasa, a research scientist at the Swift Current station. He says the field day has been offered since 2000, although, in recent years, they've moved to holding them every two years.

"This gives producers a better opportunity to observe how the forages they saw on a previous tour have progressed and matured over that time," he said. "So it makes everything more relevant and more interesting, because they're always seeing something that's changed a little bit."

Iwaasa says forage practices have evolved in recent years, with native species becoming commercially available. "A large part of our program now deals with native species," he noted, "how they can be re-established on land, some of the advantages they have in terms of quality and growth characteristics, and how they can be an important complement to the existing pasture and forage system that we have."

Native and tame forage species have often been looked at as separate choices for forage stands. However, Iwaasa indicated that research is now starting to study different possible combinations and their benefits.

(more)

"If we can combine them to see how cattle will graze these potential species, we can help producers reduce their feed costs and keep the animals on the pasture longer into the year," he said.

Another focus of research is to study the actual animal interaction with the forages being tested. Iwaasa says forages have sometimes been selected and bred without observing their response under a grazing scenario.

"You not only want forages that are productive and palatable," he said. "You also want to see if these stands can stay viable under animal impact and grazing pressure. It's not going to do you any good if you have to reseed every couple of years."

Part of the animal interaction that tour participants will be introduced to is a study looking at the production and economic impact of moving cattle to a summer calving date. The research station has shifted half of its cows in this direction, and will be discussing some of the observations witnessed.

The tour will also offer a glimpse at new forage species that have been developed by AAFC. "This gives producers a good chance to see some of these new varieties that are just coming out. They can come out and view how they're being grown and what kind of production we're getting out of them," Iwaasa said.

"It's an invaluable opportunity for producers to see how the species have performed for a couple of years before they might make that investment themselves."

Registration for the forage and grazing tour will take place in the Thomson Room at the Swift Current AAFC Research Station, starting at 9:30 a.m. The tour runs until 5:00 p.m. The cost is $5 per person, which includes a hot beef lunch.

Those wishing to participate in the tour are asked to pre-register by June 22 at the Swift Current SAF office at (306) 778-8285.

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Trevor Lennox, Forage Development Specialist
Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food
Phone: (306) 778-8294
e-mail: tlennox@agr.gov.sk.ca